OBITUARY

Obituaries of Honorary Members, Members and Companions only are published in Electronics & Power

SIR EDWARD VICTOR APPLETON

Sir Edward Victor Appleton, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.A., D.SC., LL.D., F.R.S. (HM 1952), died in Edinburgh on the 21st April 1965. To many, Appleton was first known for his experimental proof in 1924 of the reflection of radio waves from the E-region. Shortly afterwards he established the identity of a second and higher layer, the F-region. Born in Bradford on the 6th September 1892, Appleton aspired to become a professional cricketer; but a scholarship took him to Cambridge, where he graduated in the natural science tripos. After military service during the First World War, he returned to Cambridge in 1919 to work in the Cavendish Laboratory. Here he started a school of research in atmospherics and radio-wave propagation. This research continued under his inspiration while he was Wheatstone Professor of Experimental Physics at King's College, London, and later, Jacksonian Professor of Natural Philosophy at Cambridge. In 1939 he became secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, guiding its activities during ten strenuous years He was appointed, in 1949, principal and vice-chancellor of Edinburgh University, a post he held with conspicuous success until his death. Appleton was associated with activities of the International Scientific Radio Union for nearly 40 years; and was president of the Union during 1938–54.

He was a very good companion both at home and in travels abroad, a popular figure in all parts of the world, where many honours were conferred on him, including the Nobel prize for physics in 1947. He had a keen and perceptive outlook on new problems, and was undoubtedly responsible for placing and keeping Britain in the forefront of the world in many fields of research and development. He was awarded the Faraday Medal of the IEE in 1946.

R. L. S.-R.